

Lev 12-1 to 13-59 Torah Reading (Parshat Tazria)
English version with tropes April 11, 2020

12:1 Then spoke YHWH, to Moses, saying,
2 [You must speak] to the children of Israel, as follows, “A woman who conceives [and gives birth] to a boy [shall be unclean] (*tamei*) for [seven days] [since just like the days] of impurity of menstruation, she is *tamei*.
3 And on [the eighth day] [shall be circumsized] the flesh of the boy’s foreskin.
4 For thirty days [plus three] days [she will continue] in the blood of purification.
[Anything holy] [she must not touch], [and to the sanctuary] she must not go, [until are completed] the days of her purification.
5 [If it is a girl] [she gives birth to], she is *tamei* for two weeks, [just as during her menstruation].
[Then for sixty] days [plus six] days [she shall remain] in a state of blood purity.
6 [At the completion] of the days [of her purification] [for either a son] or for a daughter, [she shall bring] a lamb [in its first year] as an *olah* (a burnt offering) and a young pigeon or a turtle dove, as *chattat* (sin offering) to the entrance of the Tent of Meeting, to the priest.
7 [He shall bring it forward] before YHWH to atone [for her], [and she shall be clean] from the flow of her blood.
This is the teaching [for the one giving birth], [whether it be to a boy] or to a girl.
8 [But if there is not] found [by her hand] [enough means] for a lamb, [he shall bring] [two turtle doves] or two young pigeons: one for an *olah*, and one for a *chattat*. Thus she shall receive atonement by the priest, [and she shall be clean].”
13:1 Then spoke YHWH, to Moses and to Aaron, saying,
2* [When any person] shall have [on the the skin of his body] an inflammation (*se’eth*) or a rash [or a shiny spot],
and it becomes on the skin of his body, the affliction of *tzara’ath* (skin blanch or scale disease), *Mainly following Robert Alter
[he shall be brought] to Aaron the priest [or indeed] to one of his sons—the priests.
3 [It shall be seen] [by the priest]: the affliction [on the skin of his body], and if the hair in the affliction has turned [white in color],
and it appears that the affliction has penetrated the skin [of his body], then *tzara’ath* it is. After being seen by the priest, *tamei* he shall declare it.
4 [But if a bright spot], white in color, it is in the skin [of his body], but in depth [it does not appear] [below the skin],
and the hair has not [turned white], [then he shall be quarantined] [by the *cohen*]—[the afflicted person]—for seven days.

13:5 [He will be seen] [by the priest] on [the seventh day]. [If it happens] that the affliction [has stayed the same] [in his eyes]—
 (there has been no spread of the affliction) in his skin, [then he will be quarantined] [by the *cohen*] [end aliyah] for seven days more.
 6 [He will be examined]—the priest will see him on [the seventh day], [once again]. [If it appears] [to have faded]—the affliction—
 (there is no spread of the sore) in the skin, [he will be declared clean] by the priest: it is merely a rash. (He will wash his clothes, and is clean.
 7 [But if it has spread]—[there is an increase] of the sore [on the skin] [after the time] [that he had been seen]
 by the priest [and pronounced clean], he must be seen once more by the priest.
 8 [When he is seen] [by the priest], [and it is clear] (that there was a spread of the rash) on his skin,
 (he will be declared *tamei* by the priest), since *tzara'ath* it is.
 9 [When there is an affliction] of *tzara'ath*—when it is seen on a person, he shall be brought to the priest.
 10 [When he is examined] [by the priest], [and there is seen] [a white swelling] [on the skin], [and that it has] turned the hair white,
 [with a live patch] of skin that is vital* in the swelling, *acc. to Richard Elliott Friedman: Heb. *chai*
 11 *tzara'ath*—[a mature case]—it is in the skin of his body. [He will be deemed *tamei*] by the priest.
 He shall not confine him, since *tamei* [he clearly is].
 12 [If there breaks out] an eruption of *tzara'ath* [in the skin], and covered [by the disease] [is in fact] [all the skin] [of the afflicted one],
 from his head to his feet, [in all that is seen] by the eyes of the priest;
 13 [when such is seen] [by the priest]—[and it is observed] that covered by the disease [is his whole body], then clean [is the affected person].
 [Because all of it] has turned white, then clean it is.
 14 [But on the day] that there [is seen in it] flesh that is vital, he is *tamei*.
 15 [When there is seen] [by the *cohen*] (the flesh that is vital), [he will pronounce him *tamei*]—
 [this flesh that is vital]—*tamei* it is, *tzara'ath* is the verdict.
 16 Or, if [there should recur] (the vital skin), [and it turns back] to white, [he must come back] to the priest.
 17 [When he is seen] [by the priest], [and he observes] a change in the spot, [back to white], [then he shall be declared clean] [by the *cohen*],
 [end aliyah] [the affected person]: clean he is indeed.

13:18 [In any person's flesh], if there is in the skin thereof [a boil or blister] (*sh'chin*), and it heals,
 19 [if there should be] in the place of the boil a swelling that is white, [or a shiny spot] that looks white [or bright pink],
 [it must be shown] to the priest.
 20 [When it is seen] [by the priest], [and he observes] [that it appears] to be below the skin, and its hair has turned white,
 [then *tamei* he will be] [pronounced by the priest]. An affliction of *tzara'ath* it is, that over the boil has erupted.
 21 [But if it should be] | —[when it is examined] [by the *cohen*]—he sees [there is not in it] hair turned white,
 and lower [it has not gone], [below the skin], and [it has faded], he must be quarantined by the priest, for seven days.
 22 If in fact it has spread in the skin, [then *tamei* he shall be] [declared by the priest]. [He is unclean]. It is an affliction indeed.
 23 [But if in its same place] there remains [the bright spot]—it [has not spread], then a scar from the boil [is what it is].
 [end aliyah] [He shall be declared clean] by the priest.
 24 Or [in a body]—if there is in its skin [a burn from fire],
 [and it is the case] [that the vital] [part of the burn] [is a bright spot], bright pink in color, or white,
 25 and this is seen—[examined it is by the priest], who observes [that its hair has changed color]: the hair is now white [in the shiny spot],
 and it appears deeper than the skin, than *tzara'ath* it is. In the burn it has erupted.
Tamei [he shall be declared] by the priest. The affliction of *tzara'ath* it is indeed.
 26 [But if] | [it is examined] [by the *cohen*], who observes [there is not in the bright spot] hair that is white,
 and lower [it has not gone] [below the skin], and it [has not faded], he must be quarantined by the priest, for seven days.
 27 When he is seen by the priest on [the seventh day],
 [if it has spread]—[increased in size]—[in the skin], then *tamei* the priest [will declare him]. An affliction of *tzara'ath* it is.
 28 [But if in its same place] there remains the bright spot—[it has not spread] in the skin, and it [has not faded], a swelling of the burn, it is.
 [He will be declared clean] [by the priest] [end aliyah] [since a scar from the burn] [is what it is].

13:29 Now a man or a woman—if there comes to be on them an affliction on the head, or on the chin (*lit.* beard)—
 30 it must be seen by the priest—[he will examine the sore]. If it appears to be deeper [than the skin], [and there is in it]
 some hairs that are yellow and thin, than *tamei* he will be declared by the priest. [It is a scab or scurf], [called *nethek*].
 [As *tzara'ath*] [of the head] [or of the chin], it is regarded.
 31 When it is seen by the priest—[this affliction] [of *nethek*], [and he observes] [it does not appear] to be deeper [than the skin],
 and hairs that are black are not [in it], [then quarantined] [he shall be by the priest]—the one afflicted by *nethek*—for seven days.
 32 [When he is seen] [by the priest], [who examines the affliction] on [the seventh day], [and he observes] [no spread] of the *nethek*,
 and there is not within it hairs that are yellow, and it appears that the *nethek* is not deeper than the skin,
 33 [the person shall shave himself], but the *nethek* [he shall not] shave.
 [And quarantined] [he shall be by the priest]—[the one with the *nethek*] for seven days more.
 34 [And he shall examine]—the priest will look at the *nethek*—on [the seventh day], [and if he should observe] no spread of the *nethek* in the skin,
 [and it appears] that it has not gone deeper [than the skin],
 then clean he will be declared [by the priest]. He shall launder his clothes, and be clean.
 35 [If it has spread]—[increased in size] is the *nethek* in the skin, after [he is declared clean],
 36 [he must again be examined] [by the priest]. [If he should observe] a spread of the *nethek* in the skin,
 [there is no need for a search] [by the *cohen*] for hairs that are yellow; he is *tamei*.
 37 [And if in his eyes] there is no change in the *nethek*, and hair [black in color] [has grown upon it], then healed is the *nethek*, and he is clean.
 [He shall be declared clean] by the priest.
 38 If a man or a woman has on the skin of their body [bright spots]—[shiny spots] [white in color],
 39 [it shall be looked at] [by the *cohen*]. [If he should observe] [in the skin of the body], [there are bright spots] that [are dull white],
 [a simple rash] [called *bohak* it is], [end aliyah] breaking out on the skin; he is clean.

13:40 [And any man] who loses the hair [on the back of his head], it is simple baldness; he is clean.
 41 And if at the edge of his face [he loses the hair] of his head, he is bald at the forehead; he is clean.
 42 [Should there be] [in the bald spot] or [on the bald forehead] a spot that is white [or bright pink],
tzara'ath that is erupting [is what this is], [on his bald spot], or on his bald forehead.
 43 It must be examined [by the *cohen*]. If indeed [the swelling of the affliction] is white or reddish—[on the bald spot], or at the forehead,
 like the appearance of *tzara'ath* on the skin of the body,
 44 a man with *tzara'ath* he is, and *tamei* indeed. [*Tamei* is the verdict]—[he will be deemed unclean] by the priest: on his head is his affliction.
 45 [The person with *tzara'ath* on whom [is the affliction] [must have in his clothes]
 a piece that is torn, and his hair must be disheveled, and his mustache he must cover. “*Tamei!* | Unclean!,” [he must call out].
 46 [And for all the days] that the affliction [is in him], [he will remain unclean]: *tamei* he will be.
 Alone he shall stay: outside the camp [is his dwelling place].
 47 [Now should a garment] have within it an affliction of *tzara'ath*, whether a garment of wool, or a garment of linen,
 48 either in the warp or in the woof of the linen or wool, or in a skin, or in something made of skin,
 49 if it should be that the affliction [has a bright green color] | [or indeed] [a bright red color] [in the garment],
 or in the skin, [or in the warp] or in the woof, [or in any item made of skin], an affliction of *tzara'ath* it is. [It must be shown] to the priest.
 50 When it is seen by the priest—the affliction, he will quarantine the affected item for seven days.
 51 When he sees the affected item on [the seventh day], [if it has spread]—the affliction—[either through the garment]
 [or through the warp] or the woof, or the skin, [for whatever purpose] [that might have been used] the skin, for some task,
 [then *tzara'ath*] [of a malignant kind] is the affliction. *Tamei* it is deemed.
 52 It must be burned—the garment or [the warp thread] | [or indeed] [the woof thread], whether of wool or of linen
 or any article of skin on which is found in it the affliction, since *tzara'ath* that is malignant it is, so in fire [it must be burned].

13:53 [But if] it is examined [by the priest] and he observes no spread of the affliction [through the garment],
or through the warp, or through the woof, or [on whatever item of skin],

54 [then shall order] the priest [that the thing be scrubbed]—whatever had in it the affliction,
[end aliyah] and it must be quarantined, seven days more.

55 [When it is seen by the priest] after [it was scrubbed] [the affected item], [and he observes that indeed]
[there is no change] of the item in appearance, and the affliction [has not spread], then *tamei* it is deemed; in fire [it must be burned].
[A mark of decay] it is, [whether on its inner side], or on its outer side.

56 [But now if] it is seen [by the *cohen*], and he observes that faded [is the affected part], after it [had been laundered],
[then he] [must tear it off] from the garment or from the skin, or from the warp, or from the woof.

57 [If it appears again] [in the garment in question], or in the warp or in the woof, or [in whatever skin], then eruptive it is—
in fire [it must be burned]—[that in which] is the affliction.

58 [As for the garment] or the warp or the woof, [or whatever item] of skin that you scrub, from which was removed the affliction,
it shall be laundered again, and is clean.

59 [And so this concludes] the law of affliction by *tzara'ath* of a garment [made of wool] or [one made of linen],
one [of warp thread] or [one of woof thread], or [any item of skin], [end aliyah] to declare it clean, or unclean.

Len Fellman's English readings with tropes

The purpose of this project is to translate *THE SONG OF THE TORAH* into English.

I work by comparing as many as ten English translations of a *pasuk* and creating a cantillated English sentence that sounds as much as possible like the Hebrew. They follow the Hebrew as closely as possible, word for word and trope by trope. The English language has an amazing flexibility, making it possible to make the English word order match that of the Hebrew quite well, allowing for some “poetic licence”, and some willingness on the part of the listener to be “carried” by the melody more than by the English syntax. The translation needs to sound good when *chanted*, but not necessarily when *spoken or read*.

Unlike most translations, these “transtropilations” are not intended to be a substitute for the Hebrew. On the contrary, they are meant to provide a “window” into the Hebrew text and its musical expression. My ideal listener knows enough Hebrew and has enough interest to follow the Hebrew in a bilingual text while the *leyner* is chanting the English version, to bring the Hebrew text to life, both *verbally* and *musically*. For this purpose I use *exactly* the same tropes in the English as in the Hebrew (almost always on the corresponding English word).

The texts can be used to do **consecutive translation**, i.e. leyning a phrase in Hebrew, followed by the corresponding phrase sung in English. Some of my recordings demonstrate this. I do this frequently when leyning for groups that either know little Hebrew, or that don't have a *chumash* in front of them.

I favor literal translations (e.g. “cut a covenant”) to call attention to Hebrew idioms, and towards simpler (even if less accurate) words (e.g. Ex. 12:7 “beam above the door” rather than “lintel”) to be easier to follow. If my readings provoke a discussion of the Hebrew, I consider that as justification for using less-than-idiomatic English. I try to find just the right balance between “literalness” and “listenable-ness”. A primary goal is throwing light on the Hebrew syntax.

In order to adapt the trope symbols to a left-to-right language like English, I *reversed* the direction of the trope symbols:

mercha tipcha munach tevir mapakh *or* yetiv kadma *or* pashta geresh gershayim telisha katana telisha gedola

(Generally speaking the *conjunctive tropes* such as mercha, munach, mapakh, kadma, and telisha katana “lean toward” the words they “conjoin” to, while the *disjunctive tropes* such as tipcha, geresh, gershayim, and telisha gedola “lean away” from the words that follow, so as to create a sense of separation.)

The trope symbol is normally placed under the accented syllable, unless it is a *pre-positive* accent (telisha gedola, placed *at the beginning* of the word or phrase) or a *post-positive* one (telisha katana or pashta, placed at the *end* of the word or phrase).

The Hebrew text frequently puts a *makkeph* (which is like a hyphen) between words in order to treat them as a single word to be chanted. I use a different system for English: If an entire English phrase is to be chanted to a single trope melody, I place it between grey brackets, as in this phrase from the Book of Lamentations:

[clings to her skirts]

The *leyner* is invited to fit this phrase to the *Eicha* “rivi'i” melody in whatever way seems most natural.

As a variant of the “grey bracket” device, I indicate the following pairs of tropes by “wrapping them around” the phrase which will have the combined melody:

mercha/tipcha	kadma/geresh (<i>or</i> : azla, etc.)	mercha siluk
⏟Renew our days⏟	⏟‘She weeps bitterly’⏟	⏟a fire-offering to God⏟

Again, the *leyner* should decide on the most natural way to fit the phrase to the combined trope melody.

I put words in gray which I consider essential but which don’t strictly match the Hebrew. I also “pad” some phrases with extra words in gray to fill out a musical phrase nicely. Different trope systems vary widely in the length of the musical phrase used, so the words in gray may or not be used depending on the *leyner*’s cantillation system. In particular, the tropes *telisha g’dola* (ר), *legarmeh*, *metigah-zakef*, and *pazer* vary widely in the musical phrases used for chanting. (And please indulge me in my whimsical treatments of *shalsholet*.)

“*Metigah-zakef*” is a special trope combination which can be recognized by a kadma and a zakef katon appearing on the same Hebrew word (again, a *makkeph* makes two words into one). (There are several examples in Genesis 18 & 19, beginning with 18:16). I indicate this by placing the corresponding English phrase in grey brackets:

[Take heed—take care for yourself]

In some trope systems (notably cantor Moshe Haschel in “Navigating the Bible II”) this is given a very distinctive melody—for which purpose extra syllables fill out the musical phrase (as in “take care” in this example). Haschel’s system also chants the trope *munach* as *legarmeh* more often than other systems do.

I don’t write a single word of translation without first hearing the melody of the phrase in my mind, following one of two trope systems: The one by Portnoy and Wolff (*The Art of Cantillation*) or the one by Joshua R. Jacobson (*Chanting the Hebrew Bible*).

I transcribe the name יהוה as YHWH (in small caps). I almost always chant this as *yud-hey-vav-hey*, which I have discovered fits marvelously into several of the trope melodies. But of course the *leyner* can choose to pronounce it as “*God*” or “*Adonai*”.

The English translations I mostly use (besides several scholarly commentaries) are the following:

Aryeh Kaplan, ‘The Living Torah’ (1981) (also my source for proper names & transliterations)
Richard Elliott Friedman, ‘The Bible With Sources Revealed’ (2003)
Everett Fox, ‘The Five Books of Moses’ (1997)
The Stone Edition ‘Tanach’ (1996)
JPS ‘Hebrew-English Tanach’, (2nd Ed. 2000), *along with* Orlinsky, ‘Notes on the New Translation of the Torah’ (1969)
Robert Alter, ‘The Five Books of Moses’ (2004)
Commentaries in the ‘Anchor Bible’ series
Rotherham, The Emphasized Bible (1902)
The Jerusalem Bible (1966) (also my source for topic headings)
The New King James Bible (1982)